

OBERLIN COLLEGE
HISTORICAL COLLECTION

FROM

Mrs. E. J. Parker

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE

FREE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

OF FRIENDS, OF

NEW-YORK YEARLY MEETING.

1854.

New-York :

COLLINS, BOWNE & CO. PRINTERS,

STATIONER'S HALL,

Nos. 174 and 176 Pearl Street.

REPORT.

Since our last Report the subject of Slavery has continued to be an engrossing topic, and events of importance have transpired. On the one hand, the Slave Trade has been extirpated from Brazil, and Spain has just taken measures, which, if faithfully carried out, must lead to the same result with Cuba. Venezuela, also, has lately provided for the abolition of Slavery within her territory.

On the other hand, alas! our own land of boasted freedom and enlightenment, still takes steps backward, and rivets closer and more hopelessly the fetters of the Slave. The demon of Slavery was never more rampant in this country, and never were the exertions of the Slaveholders at the South, and their menials at the North, more strenuous, than its palsying hand may be laid on the virgin soil of the West, to increase their profits, and to strengthen their power.

Seeing that these things are so, does it not behove each one of us to press still closer to himself the query, "Does the voice of my brother's wrongs cry unto Heaven against *me*, and has the stain of this iniquity passed in the least upon my garments?" Would that all the professed friends of the Slave could hold forth *clean hands*, while they unite in the aspiration of the poet:—

"God speed the moment on
When wrong shall cease,
And liberty and love
'Throughout the world be known
As in their home above."

When a season of repentance came to the children of Jacob after they had sold Joseph into slavery, they were constrained to acknowledge, "we are verily guilty concerning our brother." Though we may not have been instrumental in sending *our* brethren into this worse than Egyptian bondage, yet are we not accessory to keeping them there, so long as we freely partake of the fruits of their toil, to procure which is the object of all the iniquity?

The testimony of the Society of Friends on the subject of Slavery, has been, (if we use the

expression,) progressive. In its early days, the advice of that "faithful elder," George Fox, touched mainly on their proper and humane treatment. Very soon, however, it was seen in the Light of Truth, that *Slave-holding* was entirely incompatible with the Christian religion. It was accordingly banished from among us. Hardly had this been accomplished, when a few valiant soldiers in the Lamb's warfare, *who followed very closely* their Great Captains's lead, found that *further* advances were to be made, and were constrained, not only to hold no slaves themselves, but to give no motive to others to do so, by trading in, or consuming the products of their toil. This concern, from that time to the present, has been felt by many Friends, but it is far from having become general in the Society.

Now may we not pause to enquire, whether our testimony against Slavery *would* thus have been brought to a stand, were we of the present day, as *faithful* as were our predecessors in the Truth, and were we not, unlike the royal Patriarch, so prone to limit our sacrifices unto the Lord, to those things which cost us nothing.

That there is a *latent* feeling of interest in the minds of an increasing number of Friends, we rejoice to know and to chronicle ; and it is our earnest desire that its development may not be prevented, like that of the good seed in the parable, either by the stoniness of the ground, on the one hand, or by the thorns of earth on the other. Then would these sad and impressive remarks, made by Samuel Fothergill, a century ago, when visiting among Friends in our Southern States, never be likely to become applicable to us :—
 “Friends here are greatly decreased in numbers, and mixed with the world, in whose spirit they dwell. Their hands polluted with the gains of unrighteousness, even the appearances of truth are almost destroyed in various parts.”

The Board of Managers have held their meetings regularly through the past year, and though, with the scanty contributions made by the members of the Association to their funds, it cannot be supposed that much has actually been accomplished, yet they have endeavored to keep alive an interest in the cause, for which we are all professing so lively a concern.

Believing it to be of vital importance that a public organ should be sustained, and that the facts and information which such a paper can furnish, should be widely disseminated, the Board subscribed to fifty copies of the Non-Slave-holder, the numbers of which, they have had forwarded to various individuals in different sections of the country.

The subject of the Guarantee Fund, for facilitating the shipment of Free Labor Cotton to England, agreeably to the plan laid down in our last Report, and which was referred at the annual meeting to the care of the Board of Managers, has received their attention, but they have not yet succeeded in raising the desired amount. The sum at present subscribed and paid in, is one hundred and forty-five dollars, which has been drawing interest since Tenth month last, and a further amount of sixty dollars promised, in case the whole sum is made up.

It is hoped the Association may take measures this year, to complete this fund of five hundred dollars, agreeably to the original proposition.

Friends need not be deterred from contribut-

ing to this fund, from a fear that the Free Labor Cotton could not be obtained in quantites, for they may be assured that there are *many* countries in the Southern States, any *one* of which, could furnish year by year, more Cotton, untainted by the touch of Slavery, than has ever heretofore been called for by all the friends of the Slaves. Greatly then is it to be deplored, that this supply cannot be availed of, when our friends in England are so much needing *it*, and *we* the goods they would so gladly manufacture.

It will be a gratification to the Association to learn that the Store under the management of Ezra Towne, for the supply of Free Labor goods, has been somewhat more prosperous than during the preceding year, and the assortment of goods has also rather increased. Great difficulty however, continues to be realized in procuring an adequate supply and variety of Cotton goods, and more united effort is required. It is hoped, that the plan proposed by the Free Produce Association of Philadelphia, for a Manufactory, will be cordially co-operated in by all the friends of the cause. The interest in the subject of abstinence

from the products of Slave labor, particularly among our Friends in the Western States, is becoming broader and deeper every year, and new Associations are from time to time forming, and stores being established, to endeavor to supply this demand. These are however, from the nature of the case, very much dependent on New-York and Philadelphia. May the time be hastened, when in each of these cities, a store may be established and *supported*, worthy of the cause we advocate, and of the greatness of the objects which it is proposed to achieve.

Signed, on behalf of the Board of Managers,

ISAAC H. ALLEN,

Secretary.

New-York, 5th Mo. 23, 1854.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

AIKIN, William	FERRIS, John H.
ALLEN, Edward J.	FIELD, Josiah
ALLEN, Isaac H.	HATCH, Phebe W.
BARTON, Abby Jane	HAWKSHURST, Sarah C.
BATTY, Joel	MACOMBER, Paul C.
BOWNE, Elizabeth	MARSHALL, Anna M.
CORNELL, Sarah C.	MARSHALL, Edward
CORNELL, Silas	MILES, Henry
DAY, Mahlon	MILLER, Charles
DAY, Mary	MOORE, Jonathan
DEAN, Laura	MOORE, Mary
DEVOL, Abner	MOORE, Ruth C.
DEVOL, Comfort	MURRAY, Mary
DEVOL, Ruth	MURRAY, Robt. Lindley
DICKINSON, Grace	MURRAY, Ruth S.
DICKINSON, Henry	PAGE, Amelia C.
DORLAND, Philip G.	PAGE, Pelatiah P.
DUELL, Phebe	PEET, Beers
EDDY, George B.	POTTER, Martha Ann
FARRAND, Frederic	ROBINSON, David

SANDS, David	UNDERHILL, Sarah F.
SHOTWELL, Abel H.	WELLS, Eliza R.
TATHAM, Benjamin	WILLIS, Thomas
TATHAM, Hannah	WILLETS, Lydia
TATHAM, Rebecca	WILLETS, Maria
TATHAM, William	WILLETS, Sarah